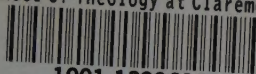


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# FAILURE AND RECOVERY





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# FAILURE AND RECOVERY

BY THE REV.

HARRINGTON C. LEES, M.A.

AUTHOR OF

"THE EYES OF HIS GLORY," "NOT DEAD BUT LIVING"  
ETC. ETC.

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TO ALL OF YOU WHO HEARTENED THE  
PREACHER BY THE EARNESTNESS OF YOUR  
FACES, AND THE DILIGENCE OF YOUR  
ATTENDANCE, AS WE ANSWERED TOGETHER  
THE SUMMONS OF BOW BELLS, AND THE  
CALL OF GOD, IN LENT, 1919, I DEDICATE  
THESE STUDIES OF REGAINED FOOTING  
AFTER SLIP AND FALL.

“ Oh, not in solitude, if souls that hear me  
Catch from my joyaunce the surprise of joy.”

MYERS, *St. Paul.*



## PREFACE

TEMPTATIONS and tendencies follow similar lines in every age. That is why an apostle's failure and recovery touches us still with the conviction of reality. We know for ourselves what the Loss of Temper, the Hunt for Fame, the Load of Worry, the Trap of Wealth mean. These seven lectures were given during Lent in the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, on the invitation of the Edward Stuart Memorial Trustees. In a previous series, *The Starting Point of Victory*, I tried to indicate some lines of Christian Optimism. Here I have sought rather to interpret temptation and fall, with sympathy and tenderness, and to point out doors of hope for those who are conscious of failure in the past.

The half-hour was an all too short time of

devotion stolen from the luncheon hour by busy city workers, and because they said these talks helped them, I dare to pray that they may be of some service to others in their turn.

HARRINGTON C. LEES.

CHRIST CHURCH VICARAGE,  
BECKENHAM.

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# **THE LOSS OF TEMPER**

“Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?” (ST. LUKE ix. 54).

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren” (1 ST. JOHN iii. 14).

## CHAPTER I

### THE LOSS OF TEMPER

THERE is all the difference in the world between the two sentiments, and yet the speaker is the same in each case. These fiery threatenings, these angry demands, fell from the lips of him whom the Church in all time has called the pattern of love. That is startling, but at the same time reassuring. It reminds us that there is no life that is unstained by failure; there are spots even in the sun; and it is not a matter for discouragement, but of the greatest helpfulness, to remember that, among the chosen twelve whom the Lord Himself grouped about Him, we find one after another, men of like passions with ourselves, stained with the same sins that daily beset our feet. There is only one life in all the world-record that is quite free from blemish and from spot—that of Jesus Christ, God's Son, our

Lord: yet it is His will, and the purpose of His Spirit, to be preparing us, that we in our turn may be presented without spot before Him at His Coming.

So it is my purpose in these simple meditations to deal with the subject of "Failure and Recovery," first as it is illustrated in the lives of the Apostles, and then as these illustrations find their counterpart in the daily life and walk of us men and women who profess and call ourselves Christians. "Failure," but also "Recovery"; for no preacher is a real messenger of the Gospel who only talks of failure; recovery is the real message of Christ; redemption, that speaks not only of pardon, the blotting out of the past, but also of power that shall enable us to do better in the future.

There can be no question that John, the son of Zebedee, had what we might call a heated temperament. We see him running hot-foot to the tomb on the first Easter morning. He is hot-tongued in the way he speaks. Some of the traditions of him confirm the impression. And our Lord Himself, when after a night of prayer He chose twelve men to live nearest to Him, named John and his brother James,

"Boanerges," the sons of thunder. If we used a modern paraphrase, we should perhaps say "fire-brand." Christ said it, I think, with a smile, tenderly; but He said it also seriously, for He was in the name warning John of a temper which might be more than a temperament, and telling him of the danger that lay besetting his way, though He was not forecasting necessary defeat. Hereditary weakness does not necessitate failure, though it does mean conflict. And so He set apart for holy service John, the thunder-and-lightning man, the fire-brand.

We catch a glimpse of a flame of fire in the words: "Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" There can be no doubt here of the flaming of anger. And anger with evil lurking in it. "Be ye angry, and sin not: neither give place to the devil," wrote St. Paul. ~~We shall find that~~ the Apostle John had been opening a door for the devil. If you study the story, you will find that there seem to be three steps. There was first the step of selfish ambition. There had been a quarrel among our Lord's own bodyguard, and

the subject of the dispute was : " Who is the greatest man ? " And then upon the ruffled spirit there had come another shadow, jealousy : " Master, we found one casting out devils in Thy Name, and we forbade him. He followeth not with us. " They would have no rivals in this work ; but the Master rebuked them for that also. And then they came to a Samaritan village, and the folk would not receive either the Lord or His disciples. Remembering that they were amid the historic scenery of a famous story of olden times, they said : " Let us call down the lightnings, as Elijah did once before, and blot out these people who refuse us hospitality. " Of course, the sentiment, in New Testament light, is hateful. At the same time, such feelings are not uncommon to-day. Why does not God stop this war or that evil ? Men ask the question, meaning an intervention of Divine judgment. You and I know in our own hearts the clamour of the spirit that would be inclined to invoke the power of God to redress men's wrongs. When St. John was writing, at a later day, perhaps thoughtfully looking back on those old times, he said : " He that hateth, knoweth not whither he is going. "



Remember the thought when there is the flame in your heart and the flash from your eyes. The angry man is on a slippery descent, and no one can forecast either the depth to which he may fall or the speed that may be attained under the driving power of hate. Cain, I suppose, did not at first mean to slay his brother; he allowed envy to find its place in his heart, until the spark blazed out in the flame of murder. Joseph's brothers were perhaps only bored by the stories of his dreams, to begin with; but there came a time when they would sell him into slavery, and cared not whether his blood was shed.

So the Master looks at this Apostle whom He loves, and says: "You know not what manner of spirit you are of." He who utters words of anger like that is following Apollyon, the enemy of the Master's, whose Greek name means "destroyer." Christ came to save men's lives, not to destroy them.

Directly we begin to analyse the reasons for failure, I think we shall find that they were much the same in John the Apostle as in our own hearts. In the first place, he was only doing what other people did; Elijah had done

just the same thing. Where was the harm? Further, it was all in a good cause; he was jealous for the honour of the Master, after all. And again, it was a matter of natural disposition; a man cannot help his temper! Have we not felt like that when we began to weigh hot temper, and the issues of it? But it is no adequate explanation for failure that other people have fallen. It is no excuse for doing wrong that we hope good may come of it. And it is no excuse that within us there is a traitor pushing us over the line, when we may find power from without that will keep us steady. Now I am persuaded that we long for better things. Unless I am very much mistaken in regard to the feeling of those who are betrayed into hot temper, there are often scalding tears, and the bitterness of remorse: we would bite our tongues off afterwards for the pain of the words that have hurt others. Christ offers us a chance for repentance and recovery. The purpose of these quiet half-hours would be lost if we only mourned over our failures, and did not point one another with glad fingers to the way of recovery.

“We know,” says this triumphant man, who

has found the secret of victory, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." St. John does not only mean Christians generally; he means himself as well. There is a great transition here. We turn from the scorching fire of anger to the glowing fireside of affection that has been kindled. There is all the difference between a fire in the house, and a house on fire. Fire is a very good servant, though it is a very bad master; and there is here the contrast between the electric light and the flash of lightning. Mark, too, the contrast between the ignorance that "knows not" what spirit it is of, or whither it is going, and the certainty of a line crossed from death to life—"we know."

We need not be downhearted because we find we have hot temperaments. It is a matter of great comfort to me that three impulsive men were chosen by our Lord to be in His inner circle, and closest to His own heart. There is one thing that is nauseous to Him, and that is lukewarmness. It is the heart that is bloodless, the pulse that is sluggish, that Jesus Christ finds repellent and difficult to deal with.

So St. John speaks, not as a son of thunder, but as a son of God. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." He is conscious of the great transition and the change that has come. And we, too, look hopefully up for a remedy; we want to know how the change has been effected; we long to learn how our own tempers may be checked; how the boiling up within us may be kept within bounds, or, better still, turned to good effect in the Master's service. "There is a giant in the kettle, mother," murmured James Watt, who harnessed the giant and turned his power to good effect. Heat means force.

And there seems to be a threefold remedy. First, there is *a change of ideal*. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is come, not to destroy men's lives; but to save them." In those words the Master turns the eye of John the Apostle from Elijah, the old-time prophet, to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He will have him study a new pattern. You and I are surely conscious of this in our own lives. Directly we get away from the thought—"everybody does it"—to

the question, "What would Jesus do?" shame begins to flood our faces, penitence begins to flow into our hearts, and we lift up our eyes to a new ideal. The old levels are too low. St. John himself wrote gladly afterwards: "The darkness is past, and the true light is now shining." "We know that we have passed from death unto life." There is a change of ideal. We love the brethren. "We love, because He first loved us." It is as we bring ourselves into line with the ideals, not only of a noble example, but of the Christ-pattern, that we humbly ask: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" That is Paul's confession. "I have been a raging wolf; teach me to be a careful sheep-dog." For, after all, a collie is a converted wolf. The best sheep-dog that Jesus Christ ever had was the man who had ravened like a wolf round the sheep-fold, tearing the flock in the old days.

There is further *change of heart*. You may be born with a bad temper, but you can be born again with a temperament that is enabled and reinforced by Jesus Christ. "Verily I say unto you, He that listens to My words and leans in faith on Him that sent Me, shall not

come into a state of conviction, but is passed from death unto life." That does not merely speak of the regeneration of a new life; it speaks of the new power which comes with regeneration. The whole of the story in the fifth chapter of St. John, in which those words are set, is one not merely of forgiveness, but of a lifting up from paralysis to power. Said a native in Central Africa to a missionary: "There was a lion in my heart, but it has been cast out by your words." Dr. George Matheson, in a suggestive preface to one of his books, asks: "What is the difference between the gentleness of Ruth and the gentleness of John?" And the answer he gives is this: "Ruth's was a matter of birthright; John's was a matter of conquest. Ruth's was temperament; John's was grace. Ruth's was planting; John's was supplanting." God came in, and not only pulled out the weeds, but planted in the new flower of Christian grace. That is the real difference between Old Testament saints and New. On the whole, the Old Testament saints are chosen for what they were; the New Testament saints are chosen for what they might be. God takes



us, as we are, low down. And He lifts us to a throne. He does not merely tell us that we are following an evil spirit; He shows to us that in Him we have a right to the power of the Holy Spirit. We were begotten again through the Spirit, and we may be producing the first fruit of the Spirit, which is love.

Again, there is also a *change of object*. There came a day when, after the mission of Philip, the evangelist, fire did fall upon Samaria, but it was the fire of the Holy Ghost; and one man who was sent by the Apostles to call down that fire from heaven was John, the one time fire-brand. What a difference it would have made if that village had been blasted at first in answer to John's prayer. The woman of Samaria, and many another like her, had been altogether driven away from the path of Christ if they had seen what revenge might mean from Christian people. Now they see the fire come from heaven, and lives are transformed, and there is great joy in that city. And there is joy in London, too, when love casts out temper, and sweetness evicts rage.

I stood some years ago by the De Beers Mine, Kimberley, and looked down the funnel

of that extinct volcano. Men were digging out blue clay, to extract little precious things that were once lumps of carbon ; through fire and pressure they have been transformed until they have become diamonds worthy of cutting and polishing, and setting in a king's crown. Do not be downcast because the fires burn and press upon your heart. Remember that as you fix your eyes on the Master, as you draw from Him of the spirit of love, as you cultivate the ideal of a noble service, He will work so that in the volcano of your heart black spots shall be transformed into diamonds of Christian character that shall one day sparkle in the crown of our Lord Jesus for ever and ever.

## THE HUNT FOR FAME

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“They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask ; can ye drink of the cup that I drink of ? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? And they said unto Him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of ; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized ” (ST. MARK x. 37-39).

## CHAPTER II

### THE HUNT FOR FAME

**I**N the last chapter we thought about John, the man who failed in anger, and recovered in love; now let us think about his elder brother, James, who failed in ambition, and recovered in sacrifice. Ambition is a Latin word which means canvassing for promotion. It reminds us that while there is implanted in all of us the natural desire to get on, it may easily be perverted into the employment of unworthy aims to secure that which we strive for. Ambition is often the turning of a good incentive into a poor selfishness through forgetting lofty ideals. It is the temptation that comes to many to trample upon the weak in order that they may become strong, and to use their crushed bodies or careers as stepping-stones by which they may rise to higher things. This temptation had

lain in wait for the feet of James, the son of Zebedee, one of the Lord's chief Apostles. Yet the desire seemed natural, and the request praiseworthy—to be close to Christ. Yes, but in the form in which the request was couched, it involved being near a throne as well. It sounded like an affectionate wish to be near the Master; but there was underlying the petition a suspicion that it was the wearing of the honours more than the presence of the Master that caused the eagerness. It was probably devotion, but it was devotion stained by ambition. John was, of course, involved with James, but for the purposes of our study we are isolating the one character.

I think as we ask what it was that caused the temptation, the first answer will be that it came through *an unworthy fear*. If I interpret the story aright, we must go back again to the Transfiguration for one of the dawns of this ambitious desire. "There are some here," said the Master, "who shall not taste of death till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power." And after that He led them up to the Mount of Transfiguration, and there He stood before them, with one great man on His



right hand, and another great man on His left hand—Moses and Elijah, and they shone out in a resplendence of power that dazzled the awed disciples. This, then, they thought, was the Kingdom that Jesus Christ had spoken to them about, in which they were to be His helpers. After that, almost immediately, and rather naturally, there came the dispute as to who was to be the greatest; and the Lord dealt with them about it. They asked Him what they should have; and careful not to discriminate, He promised that they should each have a crown. They longed to be near a throne: He said that each one should have his own throne. And then He added something that startled them: "Nevertheless, the first shall be last." Now, unquestionably, the first among the apostolic band were Peter and James and John—in that order; and it would seem that they began to be afraid for their precedence. "The first shall be last"; then it might be advisable to secure their places before the kingdom came, and so two-thirds of them syndicated against the third. James and John were brothers, and John was known as the disciple whom Jesus loved; and so they came

to the Master, these two ambitious men, even though it meant the exclusion of Peter, their partner, and the leader of the trio ; they make this unworthy request, and it was natural that the other Apostles should be indignant : "Grant that we two—never mind the rest—may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory." And as James was the elder, the right seat was, of course, to be his.

When we look back upon the ambitions that have allured us in the past, we feel that the things that seemed so dazzling, frequently look very sordid. And the verdict of conscience here is, on the whole, the verdict of history. We may discuss whether Wellington or Marlborough were the greater general ; but none of us, in the light of history, has any doubt as to which of the two was the greater man. So ambition comes, and tempts a man, just for a handful of silver, or a ribbon to stick on his coat, to sell his principles. The temptation assails him to get ten per cent. instead of five, by sailing near the wind in dubious honesty in a business transaction. The temptation to intrigue in the way of progress, and to follow a

spirit of meanness in our desire for advancement. The temptation to rob others of their rights in the climb up the ladder of success. Let every man beware of the things that seem to be bright and glittering. They will often fade and turn out to be but tinsel. Bubbles that glitter wonderfully, and seem so radiant, will burst in the hand afterwards as we turn to grasp them. This temptation came to James the Apostle along the pathway of an unworthy fear, the dread of dragging behind in the race for honour and power.

Again, the temptation came along the line of *an unworthy ideal*. On another occasion Jesus Christ spoke a parable unto them because they thought that the Kingdom should immediately appear ; and they did not understand what the Kingdom meant. He spoke to them about crowns and thrones ; and, of course, they all wanted them. Then He talked to them about a cross ; and, says the Gospel story, they did not understand, and they were afraid to ask Him. The result is that now He has to say, when they bring Him their petition : " You do not know what you are asking." That is the inevitable result of being afraid to ask for light

from Christ. If you will not bring to Jesus your ignorance as to the things He teaches you about His Kingdom and will, you will inevitably be charged, in your turn, with ignorance in the very petitions you bring. So remember that side by side with the spirit of progress and competition, together with that human feeling of a desire for honour, which has been one of the great driving factors—and not an ignoble factor—in the world's success, there must come the prayer that says: "Lord, show me what Thou wouldest have me to do, and teach me how to do the things I desire to achieve." If heavenliness is to be made into a cunning means of profit; if the splendour of the world to come is to be made the subject of competition now, then you and I will soil, not only our earthly life, but our heavenly ideals. Remember this was not the artless request of a child in the Sunday school who asks: "May I sit by you, teacher?" It is what underlies the high-sounding ideal. It is not what you say, but what you mean underneath your saying that really counts. When you look into the clear eyes of Jesus Christ you falter with such a petition. They tried to get Him to promise

blindly. They had said to Him: "Grant us whatever we ask." He said: "Ye know not what ye are praying for." He taught them the seriousness of trifling with prayer. We are lowering our ideals: we are staining our spiritual weapons when we come to Him in that way. You and I are not to pray merely that we may have increased comfort in life; we are not to ask that we may climb up the ladder of power, only because we may get an advantage over others. Prayer needs to go hand in hand with humility; desire the best at all times, and see that it is really the best you ask for. Those words remain eternally true—"He gives the very best to those who leave the choice with Him."

Yet again, the temptation came along the line of *an unworthy approach*. The consciences of these men were uneasy, even when they came with their petition, and so they persuaded their mother to do the asking for them. The idea was theirs, the request was hers.

They seem to have been an affectionate family. You may notice that their names always occur linked with one another. There was just a suggestion of using their family ties

unfairly to promote their own interests. There is an ugly word nepotism which we use to denote that failing; and Salome, though an affectionate, was an unwise mother when she consented to present this petition. Be very careful as to your ambitions for your children. And be cautious also how you endorse their fancies. Be careful, on the other hand, not to stifle their spiritual aspirations, nor damp their longings. I have known fathers and mothers who would not have minded their sons going to the remotest parts of the earth on an important commercial quest, who have been bitterly disappointed when they have wanted to go to the same spot in order to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I have known parents who were glad that their daughters should be asked in marriage by men sufficiently important or well-to-do, who were disappointed if the girl would give all her love to a better man whose possessions were less. Men often do not really desire the best things, but the biggest things for their children. That needs to be corrected by the remembrance of Salome, and her loving but foolish request for James, in his unworthy ambition.

Notice, however, that they ask with reserve : "Will you do for us anything we ask you?" Why this hesitation? Jesus says : "Bring out your request into the open ; say it out." It did not sound quite so beautiful then. They hung their heads. Still, remember He did not rebuke their aspirations, He only searched them as to their motive and capacity. "Are you sure you are able?" That is the real test. Before Captain Scott set out on his Antarctic exploration, it is quite conceivable that two of the members of his party might have said to him : "When we reach the South Pole, and are photographed together, will you allow us to stand, one on your right hand and the other on the left?" I think his reply would have been that of the Master : "Are you quite sure you can march all the way to the Pole?" That was the real test, and the Lord said : "Can you drink of the cup that I drink of?" The royal road to heavenly promotion leads out of the city to the green hill with the cross.

There is one other place where the left hand and the right hand of Jesus Christ are mentioned—on Calvary. There were two men crucified who had sold their lives for honour and



ambition, revolutionaries who had committed murder and robbery ; there they hung upon the cross with Him. That is parable as well as history. To sit on the right hand and on the left with Jesus Christ in His glory means sharing the right hand and the left with Him in His suffering. The path of promotion in the Christian life frequently goes downward. We come out into the sunshine, but it is through the shadow. Christ gave His disciples a very striking word when He said : Your ideal is to sit at the banquet of Heaven in the seats of honour ; remember that there the seat of honour is not given to the guest but to the waiter. " The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve." That was the meaning of the great scene before the Passover Supper, when they refused to wash one another's feet, which had been left undone because of the shortage of servants in Passover time ; and He rose to be the servant and washed their feet—He their Master and Lord.

So James made his request, and he did receive the answer to it. Read of his closing days when Herod arrested him ; he seems an unobtrusive character in the early pages of the Acts, but this arrest proves that he was a leader.



Kings do not imprison men unless they are ring-leaders in a movement that they hate. James was cast into prison, and denied not his Master, but drank his cup of pain ; and the sword of the executioner clave a way to James's desire. The steel key opened the door to the place of his dream. He stood his test with a cleansed ambition, and he entered into the joy and the glory of his Lord along a blood-stained pathway.

If you are filled with a holy ambition you may have your crown, but you must have your Calvary. You may ask for great things, provided that you are willing to go through the lowliest and most sacrificial pathway to receive them from Him.

I remember that this was said of the prayers of a certain man : " He asked strength that he might achieve ; he was given weakness that he might obey. He asked health that he might do greater things ; he was given infirmity that he might do better things. He asked riches that he might be happy ; he was given poverty that he might be wise. He received nothing he asked for, but was given all that he hoped for ; and so his prayer was answered."



## THE SHADOW OF DOUBT

"The disciples said unto Thomas, We have seen the Lord.  
He said unto them, Except I shall see, I will not believe"  
(ST. JOHN xx. 24, 25).

## CHAPTER III

### THE SHADOW OF DOUBT

OUR subject for this chapter is "The Shadow of Doubt." The word "doubt," originally Latin, means "to hesitate as to which of two roads is the right one"; and the phrase "the shadow of a doubt" is a proverb in our midst. It implies that the sunshine fades away from the road of life unless you are fairly certain that you are going in the right direction. It means that we must walk in sureness if we are also to walk in joy. The valley of the shadow of doubt is infinitely darker than the valley of the shadow of death. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." But the trouble of treading the valley of the shadow of doubt is that you are not certain that He is with you, and you wonder where it was that you lost Him. So John Bunyan is quite

right when he says that Christian gets into Doubting Castle because he has been caught in By-path Meadow by Giant Despair ; the result is that he dwells for a time in a dark dungeon, and the only redeeming feature is that the giant has fits when the sun shines. Therein lies our hope—to get into the sunshine is to find a way of escape from the giant of Doubting Castle. And the Key of Promise opens the way.

This is true not only for persons but nations. A people that allows itself to be publicly committed to a pathway of doubt about the claims of God, has opened the door to darkness in national life. That is not to say that immediately the darkness will begin to be felt. Because, as a matter of fact, atmosphere persists, and the Christian community makes an atmosphere in which even unbelief is kept up to certain standards, and Christian traditions and ideas create an aroma of public opinion. But in the end, remember, godlessness means darkness. I would only mention the Bolshevism of Russia as a case in point, where probably the most iniquitous decrees that have ever been published against the private rights

of the individual are a direct result of a denial of any principles of belief in any controlling power outside the earth. So doubt does mean darkness; and it is suggestive, I think, that the Church of England keeps the Festival of St. Thomas on the shortest day and the longest night in the calendar of the year.

Thomas is always considered to be the patron saint of doubt; and yet, humanlike, we often forget that he is very prince of confessors of Jesus Christ. Not St. Peter in the wealth of confession that drew our Lord's approval, not St. Paul in the warmest moments of his devotion, has ever surpassed the ecstatic confession of St. Thomas when the cloud of hesitation cleared, and he stepped into the sunshine, saying: "My Lord and my God." His failure was followed by a recovery of the most triumphant type.

We can interpret his temptation by his temperament, as often. It is well to remember that doubt is a very different thing from atheism. I have said that doubt means hesitation as to which of two roads is the right one to choose. An atheist stands committed to one way only.

The doubter often wishes to believe, and his hesitation may go with much that is admirable.

And first, doubt is compatible with a real devotion. In the eleventh chapter of St. John we hear the voice of Thomas. The Master says to His disciples : " Let us go into Judæa again." The disciples say to Him : " Master, you go at the imminent peril of your life." He says : " Nevertheless I am going " ; and Thomas cries : " Let us go also, that we may die *with Him*." The apostolic calling was this—to be *with Jesus*. St. Mark says that He called His disciples " that they might be with Him." And not even the prospect of death, or the darkness of pessimism, can keep Thomas from fulfilling the ardour of that devotion. Pessimism does not mean a dread that Christ will die. Pessimism says that when Christ dies the cause dies. St. Thomas will not admit that the torch can be carried on ; he feels that all light will be extinguished if Jesus dies. But in spite of all, his devotion and ardour are just the same.

Further, doubt is compatible with a real daring. St. Thomas is not afraid of death. Yet it is not a pleasant thing to die. There are



men who have denied their love and their honour and their faith that they might save their skin. Thomas will face martyrdom for love's sake.

And doubt is compatible with real distress. It is not true that all men doubt because they glory in doubting; although there are some who do. The shadows make men shiver, and they shrink from unbelief, even while they will not step out into faith. When the Master is talking about His departure, He says: "I go away in order that I may prepare a place where you may be with Me; and you know the way I am going"; and the distress of Thomas finds vent in a moment in the cry: "Lord, we know not the way you are going, and how can we know the way?"

There are many people whose minds are distressed with doubt, who really love the Lord. There are many who are willing to do courageous things, and who would be glad indeed if their minds could be cleared of the insistent whisperings of doubt. Doubt always means delay upon the road of life. That is why it is so imperative for it to be cleared up.

Unbelief loiters ; she cannot keep up the pace ; she hesitates between two roads. And the Master turns to St. Thomas, and says : "There is no reason for staying your pace and dallying ; I am the Road ; I am the Truth ; I am the Life."

And so the days pass, and Jesus is condemned to be crucified. He is gone. And for Thomas the fight really begins here. Jesus said : "I am the Life," but the Life is dead. How would you face a problem of that kind? Thomas has seen the awful wounds. You cannot interpret his distress, I think, unless you realise the immense impression that the wounds of Jesus, the beloved Master, had made upon his mind. Feet, and hands, and side, torn and bleeding. He recurs to them, not merely in demand for Christian evidence, but as having scarred his own memory and soul. And the Life is dead ! Then is the Truth dead too? And is the Way gone also? As Mr. Fitchett has said : "There is a doubt which is an anguish, and which is much nearer to faith than it knows."

I want to advise the young people, who are

often distressed by undigested features of modern discovery, not to be afraid of modernity or of discovery. Christianity and Christ have nothing whatever to fear from the discovery of anything which means the baring of truth. Do not be distressed because amid the chatter of men it seems to you as though you must lose Jesus. The things that are real remain. He abides. No new facts can ever dethrone Christ from the throne, or the Bible from our hearts. That is the trouble that besets Thomas here. It is a terrible thing to lose one you love from the pedestal on which you have placed him. It seemed to Thomas as though Jesus Christ had led him into a labyrinth, and then left him in the dark.

On holiday last year, I went on one occasion, with a companion, into a cavern on the side of a hill. We took with us a packet of candles, and as we went along we put them into niches in the rock, and lit them. Ultimately the cavern became very narrow, and we had to turn back. How should we have felt if we had found all the lights out? Alone in the dark, with no guide. Thomas felt like that when

the Master was not only condemned but nailed to the cross, and He saw Him die. Jesus had said, "Thomas, I am the Life"; but the "Life" has died. Was Christ mistaken after all? And doubt opens fire, and his battle begins.

It is Easter Day now, and he is brought face to face with certain things. Jesus had said: "I will rise again." Thomas found that hard to remember, and then almost incredible. Jesus must have meant something different from what He apparently said! That is one of the shadows of doubt—that it finds the word of Christ hard to accept. And then there is the evidence of others who say they have seen him—Mary Magdalene, who may, perhaps, be a trifle hysterical, and Simon, always known to be rather hot-headed! Thomas himself is not prepared to accept their testimony. That is another shadow of doubt. There are results in the lives of others which are patent, but it refuses to apply them to its own experience. Then the Apostles gathered together, I think in the hope that they might see the Master. And the Master came. St. Thomas was absent. Perhaps it was that he

was only late, for they seem to have seen him afterwards ; perhaps it was that he deliberately stayed away, and they had to look for him. Doubt is often heavy-footed because she is heavy-hearted. When they tell him the story, he proposes an absolute demonstration as the only condition on which doubt can be removed. " Unless I see, unless I feel, I will not believe." Now, is not that just what doubt demands in your heart and mine? Jesus Christ does not shrink from demonstration. You and I are not called upon to believe in a God whom nobody has ever seen. Jesus Christ came and was incarnate in order that men might know, not only that there was an invisible God, but that He could make Himself visible to men when He chose. You and I are not called to believe in a Risen Master simply on the assertion of men who heard Him say that He would rise. We believe on the testimony of those who saw Him after He had risen.

On the other hand, I must remind you that the test of sight and the test of feeling are fallacious. There are rays of light at each end of the spectrum that your eye is not capable of

indicating to your brain. No intelligent person would dream of doubting the fact that there are unheard sounds, and unseen rays of light. Why should we doubt the unseen God? There are those who say: "It is hard to believe there is a God." It is a great deal harder to believe there is no God. Can you take the alphabet, and throw it down, and see it make the "Paradise Lost"? We cannot believe that all the universe came by chance. You say: "It is hard to believe in the existence of the Incarnate God in Jesus Christ." It is infinitely harder to think that God can exist, and not communicate with His people. You say: "It is hard to believe in the Atonement, and in forgiveness." It is a great deal harder to believe that a poor stumbling man can be set to work off his sins through all eternity by a loving Father. You say that you find it hard to believe in God as Father. I am not prepared to believe in a God who is less than a Father. To me the evidences of His care are far too many. I cannot believe with Thomas Hardy that we are ephemeral things who only occupy moments in His mind. Only a limited mind gives limited attention.

The greatest men never slur matters of detail. Infinite mind has infinite powers of care. God's mind is too large not to be occupied with us always.

St. Thomas, however, is a pattern of recovery as well as an example of failure. Recovery to Thomas comes along the way of a vision of Christ, and he knows that all is true when he has seen the Master. And further, he hears the word of Christ, and he is made conscious of His unseen Presence as well as His visibility. Christ speaks to his heart: "Thomas, you said last week you would not believe unless you touched Me." How did Christ know? He was not there. That was their mistake. They did not see Him, but He was there. He quotes the very words uttered when He was not supposed to be there. That convinces Thomas; and he says: "My Lord and my God." Mastery and mystery. He follows a Leader; he acclaims Him as more than He seems.

Faith can take this way when she will. There comes a time when you have to make a choice. Doubt is not only a matter of

intellect ; it is a matter of will. "The human soul cannot sit perched on a note of interrogation, refusing to make a choice either of belief or unbelief."

I remember, in a mission in the Midlands, a young man who was a leader among local Secularists. On one occasion, by accident, he acted as a steward at a service for drunken folk who had been swept out of the public-houses at midnight. That man contrasted the glad faces of the choir on the platform with the sodden degradation of the faces of the men and women on the seats. He felt he had to make a choice. Something made them different. What was the cause of it? He could not interpret it. But it ended in his taking Christ as his Lord. The next morning he was at a breakfast for Christian workers, and he told them about his doubt and his decision. They said: "Yes, but what about the difficulties that had kept you back?" And he said: "They all went somehow; though I do not understand everything that had puzzled me, yet directly I decided to throw in my lot on the side of Christ, the light came." There is a benediction for you and for me that St. Thomas



did not earn : "Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." "Believe your beliefs and doubt your doubts, but never make the mistake of believing your doubts or doubting your beliefs." Throw your will into the scale. Choose to believe. Repeat the Apostle's creed, the creed of St. Thomas : "My Lord and my God."



## **THE LOAD OF WORRY**

*Care*  
“That which cometh upon me daily, the worry of all the churches” (2 COR. xi. 28).

“In nothing be worried ; but in everything let your requests be made known unto God” (PHIL. iv. 6).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LOAD OF WORRY

WE will now take for our subject "The Load of Worry." And every one of us will admit at once that life has very few heavier burdens. Work, of course, is not a burden; work is an opportunity. We all feel that. We say, it is not work but worry that kills. Further, worry is not a solitary burden, as a rule; it is an accumulation of little loads. It is composed of all the straws that, piled together, in the end break the camel's back. The tragedy of the load of worry is that it is an unnecessary burden. That sounds a shallow saying, and every one knows how difficult it is to avoid, but I will say it, nevertheless. There is a burden which you cannot bear—the weight of your sins. There is a burden that you may bear—the load of your neighbour's needs. There is a

burden that <sup>live</sup> you must bear—the heaviness of your responsibility to God. But there is a burden that <sup>just</sup> you need not bear, and that is, <sup>care</sup> your worries. “Casting all your ~~worry~~ upon Him; for He careth for you” was one of the choicest lessons that St. Peter had to pass on as the result of a lifelong experience of walking with Jesus Christ. And he was quoting from the experience of a Hebrew poet centuries before his time. This is an age-long need, and a blessing that is limited to no era.

It is interesting to see how different nations regard worry. You find it out when you look at the origin of their words. The Greeks thought of worry as the thing that tears a man in two, and drags him in opposite directions. The Latins conceived of it as that which causes turmoil within. And we in the Anglo-Saxon family think of it as the thing that grips a man by the throat, ~~as a wolf seizes a sheep~~, and strangles all the vitality out of him. Distraction, disturbance, and stifling. ~~We who~~ hear this word know what it means. The city is the right place to talk about worries. And at present the whole horizon is full of

shadows for those who are looking only onward, and not upward. Busy people are specially liable to the temptation. But it is a mistake to think that being busy is the same as being worried. For Jesus Christ led the busiest life that ever was lived. ~~His~~ friends were anxious about His health, for He had no leisure even for His dinner hour. His greatest friend said that if you put down in books all that Jesus Christ had done, the whole world would not contain them. Yet there never was such an unruffled Personality in the world as Jesus. He was always serene and unworried. When He was going away, one of the choicest things He had to bequeath to His people was this: "My peacefulness I give unto you."

[ In one of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's fine stories there is a picture of the yard-master of the goods depôt in an American city. And he pictures him as a small man looking down over a sea of trucks, over a mob of yelling shunters, and over a squadron of kicking, slipping, and struggling horses. Yet, amidst it all, stands this man with mild, blue eyes, calm, restful, and busy, busy beyond words. Then Mr. Kipling

pictures him amid the turmoil, humming a hymn :

All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
The Lord God *He* made all.

That is the touch of a master of literature.

It is as though the artist sought to make us realise that there may be a melody of God that sings constantly in a man's heart, even in the jangle and clash of life's worries, that can give to him the serenity which makes the watchers wonder as they look at him, and say : "Surely, he *is* the greatest man on earth." Well, the really great men are often those whom the Lord does transform, and keeps restful in the midst of their business.

Now it was this kind of omnivorous anxiety which St. Paul had to face—" *That which cometh upon me daily, the worry of all the churches.*" Ephesus and Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica, were like a series of goods trains, going in opposite directions, and all needing to be guided and directed. It was here that St. Paul's test came, and here also was his failure. He was a man of a highly nervous temperament : sensitive, affectionate,



hating to reprove; thrown into a position of command; loving his work, but often face to face with distasteful necessities. Here in his Second Letter to the Corinthians he lays bare his heart: and it is the least restful of all his letters. He was in the midst of a storm. If you want to see the historical setting, read the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth chapters of the Acts. The Jews were increasingly bitter against him. They were his own people, but they hated him the more on that account. The Trades Unions in Asia Minor had raised up a riot against him, so that he had to flee, though God's door of service stood wide open. As he says in an earlier part of the Epistle: "We were weighed down exceedingly beyond our strength." And then, over and above that, the city of Corinth was giving him trouble. There were blots upon the fair fame of the Church's purity. And in addition there were spiteful whisperings and gossip against the Apostle himself. ~~Some of~~ the sentences that are not easy to understand in this Second Letter are perfectly clear when we put them in inverted commas. They are the echoes of the street talk and the Church

vestry gossip, recounted to St. Paul, and then dealt with and answered by him. These things embittered his life at this time.

It will help us also if we recall the geographical situation of those two cities. Ephesus on the east, and Corinth on the west, stood at the two ends of a horseshoe, with the sea between. St. Paul sent a letter by Titus across the water to Corinth; and he told Titus to come back by land round the bend of the horseshoe on the west, and he himself would come up on the east side and would meet him at the top, at Troas. When the letter had gone, he was very eager to hear the result of it. The unnerving effect of personal animosity was telling upon his spirit. And there was the uncertainty which an unanswered letter ever gives, even in these days of rapid posts and organised mail services. So Paul came to Troas, and no Titus was there. But God gave him an antidote, a chance of service. "When I came to Troas, a door for the Gospel was opened unto me of the Lord." But he could not use his opportunity. Hungry people were waiting for a message, and he could not give them the message of the Gospel of peace,

because there was not peace in his own heart. He says: "I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother."

It is interesting, in passing, to remember that the first time St. Paul went to Troas he hoped to preach there, but God said "No." The second time God bade him to preach, and St. Paul said "No." And the third time, later, St. Paul was eager to preach, and the Lord gave him another chance. We shall sympathise with him in the long preaching that sent Eutychus to sleep, if we remember that the Apostle was making up for lost time. This, however, is the story of the second visit, and that is where Paul failed. Our Lord said, in His parable of the sower: "Worries choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful." Paul's message was choked back by worry. So, in his restlessness, he presses on to Macedonia, longing for Titus; but there things are no better: "We were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." Worry is nearly always a form of fear. It is not the thing that immediately faces you that worries your soul. Worry is oftener fear about the issue of something you have done,

or something you may have to do. Worry is frequently not a thing of the present, but of the future and the past.]

We read on further through the Epistle, and we find another indication of unrest: "That which cometh upon me daily, the worry of all the churches." This is more than an incident. It is becoming a daily habit. And the word he uses for "cometh upon me" means riot, a daily riot. In the Greek version of the story of Dathan and Abiram, and in Acts xxiv. it means a riotous disturbance. He recalls other similar scenes. A thousand voices all clamouring for his life; the mob is stilled by the garrison that is brought down; the soldiers come, and the sedition is quieted. St. Paul's heart every day was filled with clamouring voices, and the worries of an ever-growing responsibility were choking his restfulness. He needed a garrison to still the disturbance within.

[ The irony of the whole situation was that everything was right all the time in the matter of the letter to Corinth. When he was in Troas things were right; when he was hurrying on to Macedonia, things were right; but

he did not know it. ~~Oh the pity of it!~~ His loss of peace was needless. And God knew all the time that it was so. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord ~~Jesus~~ gives this remedy for worry : "Your Heavenly Father knoweth," even though you do not. ~~There are some who~~ read these words who are in positions of responsibility ; you have to command. Your position may be a small one, or it may be great. You may be the forewoman of a room, or the head of a business ; but your Father knows your needs and your loads. Cast them ~~on Him.~~ In every one of our lives the things that make our days bitter are not so much the tasks we do, as the worries we have in doing them. "God comforted me by the arrival of Titus," says St. Paul. And your Titus may be on the way even now. Things were working rightly, but Paul worried himself into incapacity because he did not know. Bunyan says "that Little-faith (and, of course, Little-faith is always worrying) is robbed, not of his jewels, but of his ready money." That is a true allegory. The Christian who worries is not robbed of his jewels—his soul's salvation is assured, his walk with God is guarded—but

he goes along life's road a spiritual pauper without tranquillity, and the people who meet him are impressed by his poverty. He frets in the office ; he fidgets his clerks ; he worries his wife ; or perhaps the wife worries her husband. Worry is not the prerogative of one sex more than the other. Is there no remedy ?

Do you remember in Frederic Myers' *St. Paul* he pictures something of the situation I am discussing :

Thus as I weary me and long and languish,  
 Nowise availing from that pain to part—  
 Desperate tides of the whole world's great anguish  
 Forced through the channels of a single heart.

So to Thy presence get me and reveal it,  
 Nothing ashamed of tears upon Thy feet,  
 Show the sore wound and beg Thine hand to heal it,  
 Pour Thee the bitter, pray Thee for the sweet.

Then through the mid complaint of my confession,  
 Then through the pang and passion of my prayer,  
 Leaps with a start the shock of His possession,  
 Thrills me and touches, and the Lord is there.

That is the real remedy of all the worry : To pour out the bitter, and to take from His hand the sweet. The Lord is there.

Four years after, we view St. Paul again.

He is in a prison, and he is writing to the Macedonians. He is handcuffed to a sentry. Think of what that must mean to a man of Paul's temperament. He is kept within bounds of a hired lodging at the best and a dungeon at the worst. What galling restraints. There are bitter plots and cabals even among Christians in Rome. But, in spite of it all, he says: "Be worried in nothing; but in everything by prayer let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God that passes understanding will garrison heart and thought for you." He remembers the garrison that came down to quell the riot; he has the whole vivid picture of the mob before his eyes. Paul has learned his secret; there is a great recovery here. He is tranquil and radiant with the peace of God. He has learned that which Hudson Taylor once finely expressed, that in a thousand troubles and worries that beset you in life nine hundred and ninety-nine work together for good to them that love God—and *one more*. That is true. And the one more makes all the difference in quieting the riotous worries.

Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall



sustain you. If you are fevered so that you fail to grasp firmly life's responsibilities ; if your heart is so distracted that you cannot give your mind to one thing, and that the plain duty before you ; if you are all stirred up within by a storm so that it seems as if even Jesus could not walk to you across those waves—then cast at His feet the bitter, and pray Him for the sweet. Commit your load of worry to Him ; “ Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee thine heart's desire.” And heavy work shall be transformed ; dreaded tasks shall become a joy ; and the clouds shall be swept away from the horizon by the breath of the Spirit of God. And though you cannot understand it, and the world cannot understand it, yet the peace of God shall set its sentries, and shall guard in perfect tranquillity and serenity the life that was once disturbed, and is now full of privilege and opportunity and work, without the hamper and the harass of worry.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease.  
Take from our souls the strain and stress  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.



## THE LOAD OF WORRY

69

Breathe through the pulses of desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm,  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,  
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,  
O still small voice of calm !



## **THE GRIP OF FEAR**

**"Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all" (ST. MATT. xxvi. 69, 70).**

**"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter they marvelled ; and they took knowledge that he had been with Jesus" (ACTS iv. 13).**

## CHAPTER V

### THE GRIP OF FEAR

THE wise man in the Book of Proverbs says, that "the fear of man bringeth a snare." It was the fear of woman that brought a snare to the feet of St. Peter, which resulted in one of the two most notorious instances of apostolic failure. It is important to remember that in the temptations of life the question of sex has so potent an effect. It is our privilege, and also our responsibility, to realise that we are what we are in relation to one another. Man and woman have much to be grateful for, as well as to dread, in this connection. And it is part, also, of the perversity of human nature that while men have talked so largely about the stumble and fall of the Apostle Peter, they have so seldom talked of that recovery which made him as bold as a lion. There is in the history of the Church of Christ no more signal instance

of courage, no braver bearding of the enemy in face of peril, than that which characterises St. Peter as time after time he stands before crowds and rulers thirsting for his blood, and gnashing their teeth with rage ; and he speaks with a boldness that makes them understand that however much he had denied his Master in the past with his lips, nevertheless his life and his heart were now transformed. He showed to the world that he "had been with Jesus," and had come back to stay with Him for ever. So I ask you to think with me of that transformation, the need for it, and its cause.

As I interpret the character of St. Peter, he was naturally a fearful man. We more usually think of him as a bold man who fell into cowardice. It is, perhaps, truer to say—bearing in mind the psychological marks of his story—that he was a vulnerable man whom the power of God made strong. One of the very earliest things, for instance, that the Saviour said to him, as he fell down in the bottom of the fishing-boat, crying impulsive and incoherent words, was : "Fear not." His impetuous acts, his hasty words, are well-known symptoms of nervousness. When St. Peter and his fellows

were distracted amid the storm in the centre of the Sea of Galilee, it was the Master's words, "Be not afraid," that brought him out to tread the waves ; and yet it was fear, after all, a few moments later, when he beheld the fierceness of the storm, and lost the momentary courage that the Master's voice had inspired, which had cost him his life but for the grip of the Saviour's hand. Impulsiveness is very frequently a mark, not of courage, but of fear. And so on the Mount of Transfiguration the Evangelist tells us that it was because St. Peter was afraid that he spoke the unweighed words about staying there on the high peak, and building shelters so that he and the others might keep the wonderful vision. It was fear, as I understand the situation, which made Peter draw his sword, and strike the futile blow that ought to have killed Malchus, and only sliced off his ear. It is fear which we see in him at a later day, at the time of the great controversy regarding the Jewish Christians and their close-ringed fellowship, and the possibilities of wider union which the new inflow of Gentiles was offering. And St. Peter, though he had had a great vision of open doors, momentarily fell into a lapse. The champion

of Cornelius became the waverer of Antioch. But he was recalled by the strong courage of St. Paul to a position from which he did not afterwards fall.

Now, no one should judge St. Peter harshly just because he was a fearful man. For, in the first place, if we understand our own hearts, there is fear of some kind in every one of us. We have to admit it at almost every turn and step in our spiritual life. No one, for instance, who has ever felt nervous in an air-raid, because he thought that death might come upon him the next moment—no one who has ever stayed at home on Sunday evenings because friends had come in, and he was afraid to admit that he usually went to church—no one who has been silent when an evil story was told, or an ill-natured slander was passed round—no one who has ever sworn an oath out of sheer bravado in the midst of a crowd of other men—no man who has been afraid to be strictly honest in a difficult transaction for fear of loss—none of these has a right to throw stones at Peter because he was a fearful man. The fact is that circumstances, and often public opinion, drag down our standards even against



our wishes ; they lower our temperature and bring it below normal, so that we are not able by ourselves to live as free men up to what we know to be the true and the right. And we need a tonic and a counterpoise. "He feared men so little because he feared God so much," may be made true for others besides Havelock.

But, of course, the most signal instance we have of St. Peter's cowardice is that which took place in the midst of the menacing crowd, and in face of the mocking maid who taxed him with having been in the train of the Man who stood in the dock on trial for His life. ~~And St. Peter's~~ denial, and his distress over his denial, are part of that common heritage of the Church of Christ which warns and blesses us all along our dangerous course. Circumstances are often too strong for us ; and the circumstances of that night had all paved the way for the Apostle's denial, just as the weakening influences of a cruel imprisonment paved the way for Cranmer's recantation of his belief in the free principles of the Gospel of Christ. The chill of a spring night in Palestine had got into Peter's bones. There was also the lowering effect of what we sometimes call two - o'clock - in - the - morning

courage. There was all the unnerving influence of a disturbed night. It was not a sleepless night. Would to God it had been! The greatest thing that was wrong with Peter was the fact that he had been sleeping when he ought to have been praying. Three times the Master had come and touched him on the shoulder, and said: "Keep awake, and pray, lest you enter into temptation." For prayer is the real antidote to failure; and St. Peter fell into the snare of the devil because he had been too sleepy to say his prayers.

Now facts like this, and even the depth of a fall, are to be no bar to us, any more than to St. Peter, against rising from our dead selves to higher things. As some one—Lowell, I think—has said in suggestive lines :

Build on resolve, and not upon regret  
The structure of thy future. Do not grope  
Among the shadows of old sins, but let  
Thine own soul's light shine on the path of hope  
And dissipate the darkness. Waste not tears  
Upon the blackened record of past years,  
But turn to live, and smile, oh smile to see  
The fair, white pages that remain to thee.

And so Cranmer, who has signed his recantation, rises again to confess boldly his belief in the fair, free faith of Jesus Christ his Lord,

and even has strength to plunge the weak right hand into the licking flames of fire, that it may be offered up first as a sacrifice to his Master. And he comes down through the centuries, not only as a prince of prayer writers, the author of some of the noblest words in our Prayer-book, but also as one of the great martyrs who shed his blood that you and I might have the heritage in the Church we prize to-day.

In the old Egyptian hieroglyphics, the symbol for the impossible is two feet upon several curved lines ; it means, that no one can walk on the water. Now that, I take it, is the heraldic crest of St. Peter's life and work. He was taught to do the impossible. He trod upon the waters and sank at first. And then Jesus took him by the hand, and they walked together on the stormy waves back to the boat. He did it in effect all the rest of his life. And naturalists have named a sea-bird after him, petrel, the feathered St. Peter that is undaunted by the storm.

So now we are to see how he gained his victory. I think he learned four secrets into which we may all be admitted. And the first is *the tenderness of Jesus over acknowledged sin.*

In the moment of denial He looked, and the very look melted away the icy cowardice that bound Peter's heart. And he went out, not to hang himself, like Judas, who never asked for forgiveness, but to weep with bitter wailing, and to confess before God the sin into which his fear had betrayed him. He could talk to God though he got no further word with Jesus. And then his heart was revived by a message. "Thy gentleness hath made me great," says one of the Old Testament hymns. And on Easter morning one of the things that revived the drooping spirit of St. Peter, and brought him up from the pit of penitence to the pedestal of power, was the word, "Go tell His disciples, *and Peter*, that Jesus goeth before you into Galilee."

*The Vision of Christ* is the second secret of recovery after failure. You remember that on Easter evening they said, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared *unto Simon*," the very one who had denied Him. When St. Paul is telling the tale of the official visions of the Risen Christ, he says: "First He was seen *of Cephas*," that leader of the twelve, who had fallen almost to the bottom in the

apostolic band. The interview is private (are not all such interviews?), but its results are world-wide. In after years this man wrote to churches terrorised by persecution into the possibility of denying the Lord; and he let them into the secret of his own constant strength, when he said: "Be not afraid with their terror, but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord, and be ready always to give an answer to every man." Have a coronation service that shall put Him in His true place; and then neither Caiaphas, nor Annas, nor Pilate, nor Herod, nor Pharisees, nor howling multitudes, shall have power to make you swerve from your confession. "Fear not them that kill the body," says our Lord Jesus, "and then afterwards have nothing more that they can do."

During a most strenuous attack upon one of the British trenches the men were wavering before heavy shell-fire and surging waves of enemies, and one of our chaplains was heard roaring amid the din, "For God's sake, men, hold on; your bodies can only die once; but you have souls that will live for ever." And the men rallied to their post, and held the line.

"Be not afraid with their terror. Consecrate Christ as King in your hearts." "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him."

The third secret is *the power of the Holy Spirit*. Pentecost is the real interpretation of the boldness of St. Peter. It was Pentecost which enabled him not to flinch from the foe, but go to meet him. As some one has said: "St. George ceases to be a saint if he pretends not to see the dragon, but goes by on the other side of the road." Peter does not now turn his back to the foe. But, by the Spirit, we find him addressing the crowd, stabbing them to the heart with the boldness of his word. Again in the Temple he tells the multitude that they killed the Prince of Life; and the men who had said, "His blood be on us," cringe with hate and fear and say, "Ye intend to bring this Man's blood upon us." St. Peter goes to prison for that; and when he comes up for his trial, he says: "We cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard." And they took knowledge of him, when they saw his boldness, that the servant maid was right after all. He had been with Jesus. The Spirit of Christ imparts a power which enables us to walk in

His footsteps, to carry His cross, and to go even to Calvary with Him.

The fourth secret is that to which I alluded earlier—the *power of prayer*. When St. Peter and the rest were dismissed from the assembly, the foe realised there was nothing they could do that would terrify them ; and the Apostles went home and prayed, “ Lord, grant to us power to speak Thy word with boldness.” And the Spirit came again with a new reinforcement, so that in a very little time, when they have to stand once more before accusing magistrates, they boldly say : “ We *must* obey God rather than men.” It is prayer which makes it possible for the Christian to bear ostracism, to be counted eccentric, to risk bloodshed, knowing that there is an eternity of life for those who follow. So to Peter is granted a great vision of the wider Church, and he has the pluck to face that which is hardest of all to face—his own prejudices, and the prejudices of others ; to acknowledge that God is right when He says, “ These men are not unclean.” St. Peter had said, “ I have never eaten anything unclean,” presuming to correct God’s thoughts of cleanliness. Our own prejudices drive us to



that madness sometimes. But the Holy Spirit gives him that catholic breadth which will embrace all men within the scope of the redeeming arms of Jesus Christ.

This then is the victory over fear, with its fourfold secret which is yet one, namely, Christ Himself.

There was a little lad who had to go along a certain road on an errand, as it was getting dusk ; and he looked up into his mother's face and said, "Mother, I am not exactly afraid, but I do not know the way. Would you go a little way with me?" The mother looked down, and saw the shadow of nervousness on his face, and said, "Mother will go all the way with you, son." And that is the guarantee of the Master. If our hearts are fearful we look up, and then we stretch out timid fingers, and put our hands in His, and He says, "I will go all the way with you."

When Christ first called Peter, He found him mending his net ; and the memory came back to the fisher of men, when he realised the failure that had torn the net of his life and made him less capable of catching a multitude. So in the letter already quoted he said : "The



God of all grace Who hath called you unto His eternal glory after that you have suffered awhile, shall mend you." It is the same word though our version renders it differently. You may be repaired as he was, and recover your nerve. And this is the secret of the recovery of the coward who was made into a lion by Christ; and that is the secret which shall take away the tremulousness from our witness, and make us bold without arrogance, to tread the way, and drink the cup, and bear the cross after Jesus.



## **THE TRAP OF WEALTH**

**“ This ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell away ”**  
(ACTS i. 25).

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TRAP OF WEALTH

SATAN has guns of widely varying calibre. And in these studies we are estimating our spiritual powers of reply. We are thinking of men who were wounded, and who returned healed to fight again.

It is well to remember that failures often throw light backwards on tendencies. St. John's cry for lightning to come from heaven reveals the earlier tendency of "the son of thunder." St. Peter's instability in time of crisis shows that it was not without reason that Christ promised to make sandstone from sand in his soul's temple-building. So here, as we study the life and career of Judas, we may believe that he was all his days a lover of money. Now, of course, "the love of money is a root of all evil," but the use of money is an exceedingly great opportunity of service.

It is sheer hypocrisy to pretend that money does not count. Money does count when you estimate it at its right value. Christ can do without it, but you cannot. Christ does not need it, but you do. Money is just one of the currencies of life, and in itself is colourless.

I was reading one of those American stories of financial smartness, which makes one hesitate whether to laugh or cry. In it the wife of a good-humoured rascal is thankful that in certain transactions he has made his money cleanly; and he looks at her, and asks quizzically: "Is a dollar ever honest?" Now that is a cynic's question. A coin may be quite clean. Mammon is not money; it is money exalted to the throne of God. So the love of money is that which cramps the fingers, and buttons up the pocket, and draws tight the lines of the face, and petrifies the heart. I think I would rather work for the reformation of a drunkard than of a miser. The people who are stingy give me a worse heartache than some people who are lax-livers. Because in the one there is an element of penitence; you can nearly always find a soft spot; but in

the other there seems to be a barrier of rock that no appeal and no consideration ever breaks down. So now, when we consider the life of Judas, we think of him not merely as a spy in the camp, a man at whom all ages point the finger of scorn. Lavater was right when he said, "Judas fell like Satan; but like a Satan who had it in him to be an Apostle." After all, when we think of our meanest moments, we may say, "There, but for the grace of God, goes myself." So when Judas "left all and followed Jesus"—and, remember, that was the universal condition of discipleship—there was not only joy in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner who had repented, and had got his hands opened; there was also a sense of relief from captivity in the heart of Judas. He went forth that day a free man; the demon lodger had been cast out. Before Judas was chosen as an Apostle Jesus spent some hours in prayer. He knew what He was doing. St. John tells us quite definitely that He knew beforehand who should betray Him. But Jesus rose from His knees after a night of prayer, and deliberately chose Judas. Why? St. Mark tells us in one of the most

beautiful phrases in the whole of the New Testament: "He called unto Him whom He wanted." Jesus wanted Judas, and that was why He called him. And so St. Peter says: "He was numbered among us, and he received his portion in this opportunity of service."

[ Judas had capacity for handling money. And so the Lord, Who gives us all our talents to trade with, and "to every man his work," made Judas the treasurer of this little brotherhood. ~~I am told that~~ It is the custom at every Masonic banquet for the treasurer to occupy the seat on the left hand of the chairman. It was probably that seat which was occupied by Judas at the Last Supper. Read Edersheim's *Life of the Messiah*, for the proof of it. St. John sat on Christ's right hand, and Judas on His left. "He had the bag." There is nothing originally sinister in the phrase. Do not let us begin to colour our present conception of him by the thought of the future. It was perfectly right that he should have the bag. Some one had to have it, and it was given to the one who had the greatest capacity; and, as our Lord said: "The light of the body



is the eye ; when therefore thine eye is single thy whole body also is full of light." Judas had a single eye when he first took the bag, and his body was radiant with the light of Jesus. [In the same chapter in which our Lord said those words, however, He warned men that when the devil is gone out of a man he wanders about restless ; then he comes, and looks in through the windows of the old tenement and says : " I will return unto my house whence I came." But he only can return if he finds the house empty as well as swept and garnished. And, alas ! it is true that Judas' heart was like that. It was swept, it was garnished—this was a new Judas ; but it was empty. The devil had been cast out, but somehow Jesus Christ never got on to the throne of Judas' heart. And so the result came which our Lord said would come. " Then he taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself ; and they enter in and dwell there." And his last condition is worse than his first.]

[I want to think with you of seven devils that came unto Judas. And the first was *the devil of disloyalty*. About a year before Jesus

Christ was crucified. He wrought a great miracle, the feeding of the five thousand; the people were so excited that they said: "Here is the Messiah"; and they were going by force to make Him a King. But our Lord withdrew; His Kingdom was not of this world, else would His servants fight. He would have no rioting in a popular movement of a nationalist character to put Him on the throne. Judas' heart was bitterly disappointed. His dreams of empire seemed to go. He was treasurer; he would be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the days that were coming; and that dream seemed to be vanishing away. And at the end of that chapter we read that our Lord said words which divided the multitude into two. Our Lord's words always have that effect. Do not think that if Jesus Christ preached every Sunday the whole congregation would be converted. Some would go out and say, "We have never heard it after this fashion," and would decide to follow Him; and a great proportion would go out and say, "These things are too hard for us." Men had to hate or to love Jesus. Now Christ asks, "Will ye also go away?" And St. Peter

replies, "Where else can we go? you only have the words of eternal life." But the Lord says: "Even among you there is one who is now an enemy," a scout of the devil. "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the Kingdom." Even within twelve months the cloven hoof is beginning to be seen in the footprints of the apostolic band. Men who have been in fight say that one of the symptoms of incipient cowardice is the furtive glance over the shoulder, preliminary to running away. Judas had taken the look over his shoulder: "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back over his shoulder, is fit for the Kingdom of God." Judas was doing that; and the demon of disloyalty came.

In its train there came a second—*the devil of dishonesty*. Judas had no chance of making money in those days, so he had to take it instead. The devil says: "Men must get on." Of course such a breach of the law of honesty makes us recoil, and say: "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" But, nevertheless, if we really examine our own lives in the searchlight of the Spirit of God, we shall

sometimes have to look back and say that there were points here and there where we did break in some way the law of honesty. -My own ministerial experiences tell me that again and again people have to confess, with tears, in after life, little ways in which they have not been pickpockets, but, nevertheless, not quite honest about bazaars, about taxes, about bills, about railway tickets, about customs dues, about fair returns of work for wages paid. Above all, we shall have to own that when we kept back from God that which is His, when we spend on ourselves that which really belongs to His Kingdom, when we refuse to give to His poor, when we keep for ourselves all that He gives us, we are forgetting the word which says: "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price."

There came next *the devil of meanness*. Judas began to begrudge the presents given to Jesus Christ. There were a number of wealthy people who saw that the Master never looked after Himself; He was so busy that He had no leisure so much as to eat. And so Joanna, who was the wife of Herod's chamberlain, and a number of other women who had money,

said : " We will see to it that Jesus does not go hungry." And so they followed Him, and ministered to Him of their substance. And the bag that Judas carried was often heavy, and he began to think that he had fat pickings ahead. Then there came a night when Mary, in a gust of penitence, broke a precious casket, because she could not open it, smashed it entirely, and poured the valuable contents on the Master's head. Judas said, " Three hundred pence (nine pounds)! What waste!" Hark to the tone of it. Disappointed greed.

Is it ever waste to be lavish in love? I am not sure. But I am quite certain that it is never waste to be extravagant in love to Jesus Christ. So here the third devil enters in and takes his place. We can still hear the Judas tone, " Collection for Foreign Missions? I am not going to church to-day. I do not believe in sending money out of the country ; it is only wasted on niggers." Have you not heard it said? They do not say it so much to us clergy, but hey say it to you layfolk. And the Master hears it. It is not waste. It is given for love of Him. We love because He first loved, and His love is fragrant, and

must be told; like Mary's love, the wide world over.

Then there comes stealing in over the threshold—for the door is open now—*the devil of covetousness*. Judas, who had begrudged the presents that were given to Jesus, now begins to covet the gifts that were given to the poor. In one little phrase that comes twice in St. John's Gospel we are told that it was Judas' business to buy provisions for the apostolic band, and also to make distribution to those that had need ; but, says St. John, he did not care for the poor ; he had to give to them because Jesus made him. He did not care for them. Why? Because he was a thief. And after that incident of Mary and the precious ointment, when the words of Judas brought a stern rebuke from the lips of Jesus, we are told by St. Luke : " Then Satan entered into him." Now that does not only mean that the devil of covetousness enters in, but it means also that you give Satan an opportunity to take possession of the heart every time you turn your back upon spiritual privilege. When you despise the love of Jesus, when you grudge the gifts to His poor, you are opening the door,

and you are issuing an invitation to Satan to walk in. So Satan entered into him.)

Then there came, fifth—*the devil of callousness*. Judas has begun to make arrangements in his own mind, and he has been to the priests. And now, says St. John, they sit down at the Supper Table, and the devil has already put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him. But Jesus will not give in. He is fighting Satan for the soul of Judas. How did He do it? He did it in the most tender way. This man was a thief. I fear some of our friends would not have allowed him to come to the meeting or break bread. But that is not the Master's way. The Lord let Judas come, and He put him at His left hand; it was the place of honour. All the disciples wanted it, and the Lord had to rebuke them. They were quarrelling, even on the eve of Calvary, as to which should have the seat of honour. That is one reason why not one of them would get up and do the servant's work of washing the others' feet. Judas sat as an honoured leader at Jesus' table. But that was not enough; that did not melt the heart of Judas. There was one other thing Jesus could do; and the same



thing is done at the table of the Bedouin sheikh to-day. He takes a portion out of the common dish and puts it into the hand of his guest. It is a mark of appreciation and honour. And Jesus did that. He took the sop, and gave it to Judas. And Judas took it and went out and betrayed Him, in spite of it. No wonder Jesus said, "Ye are clean, but not all." There are those who wash their hands with water, but whose souls are not clean when they are finished. Judas was like that. I do not wonder that St. John has to record that once again the door opened and "Satan entered into him." Satan came in and Judas went out. And it was night.

Then there came *the devil of treachery*. Judas went off to the chief priests and said, "What will ye give me?" Have you not heard something like that before? I catch the echo of a voice, and it is St. Peter's voice, "What shall we have?" It is different, yet it is the commercial spirit invading the very sanctuary of religion. "What will ye give me? Jesus will not give me anything, not even the three hundred pence." The chief priests say: "We will give you thirty pieces of silver; that is



nearly four pounds ; it is not nine pounds, but it is something." So Judas sells Jesus. Then he goes and invests it in land. He had had an eye on that field for some time ; and he goes and arranges to buy it. That is not all. The devil of treachery does not stop at that. There is a prayer place, lent by the owner of a garden of olive trees ; Jesus has gone there to pray, not for the first time. "Jesus oft-times resorted thither." Judas says : "We are sure to find Him there praying." Could anything be baser ? Is that all ? No ! The tender, affectionate disciple leans forward and kisses his Rabbi on the cheek—a mark of absolute trustworthiness. Canon Tristram says that when he was travelling his dragoman whispered to him : "Do not trust that sheikh ; he has not kissed you on both cheeks." I think that the Greek in the Gospel story implies that Judas kissed Jesus on both cheeks. And the Lord turned on Judas, and said : "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss ?" [Is there any worse devil than treachery ? Yes, one.]

There is a seventh devil, *self-murder*. We must understand that Judas had been really killing his better self for a long time ; and the

rope only finished what he had already begun. The suicide began with the entrance of the first devil ; the seventh only finished the work. " I have sinned " ; here is remorse. " I have betrayed innocent blood." Yes, but there is no confidence in Christ's love mixed with this confession. Judas was choked by the very devils he had allowed to come in, like the swine possessed by the regiment of demons. The devil is a mean master. He will not give you even the bribe he has dangled in front of you all along the way down to perdition. I was reading a story the other day of a man, a great speculator. He had his portrait painted, and the artist said : " Do you know I caught the better man that was in him ; and I put him on the canvas. And he came to look at it, and turned from it, and looked at me, and said : ' That's a fine fellow, but he is far too fine for me. That man could not live in Wall-street.' I said to him : ' Is there any reason why this man should not be you ? ' He replied : ' If I had lived like that I should be only poor David Cardigan now.' And I wondered if he was not poor David Cardigan even now." That was Judas. Poor, with the wages of sin in his hand,

and flinging them down in loathing; finding the silver hot in his palm, and dropping it. Have you ever watched a diver? He puts on his rubber dress, and shoes weighted with lead, and deliberately sinks himself. Down he goes into an alien atmosphere, and breathes the air that is sent down to him through a tube. By and by he desires to rise, but the lead holds him down. He just pulls a rope, and is drawn up. Judas sank himself with silver, but he never pulled at the rope, and he was not drawn up. I dare not say that he whom our Lord called "the son of waste"—using the very word that Judas had used—might not have been pulled up if he had given the signal, but he never gave the signal. And the Master, Who had rescued Zacchæus from "the Trap of Wealth," the Master Who, even on the cross, looked for an honest man inside a thief, and found him, and promised him Paradise as He hung there beside him, had to mourn an Apostle who failed, but, so far as we know, did not recover. Beyond that we may not penetrate. St. Peter only reverently says, "He went to his own place." He does not say what the place was. "Shall not the Judge of all the

earth do right?" All I do say is that "there is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared"; and that for us even seven devils may be cast out, as Mary Magdalene had them cast out—if we will ask Him.

## **THE TEST OF DIFFICULTY**

"Andrew brought Peter to Jesus" (ST. JOHN i. 42).  
"Andrew cometh and telleth Jesus" (ST. JOHN xii. 22).  
"Andrew asked Jesus, When shall these things be?" (ST.  
MARK xiii. 3, 4).

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TEST OF DIFFICULTY

AND so it is obvious, since even a straw shows which way the current is flowing, that Andrew's habit of life was to refer everything to Jesus. That is a reason why no failure is recorded of Andrew.

Our subject is "The Test of Difficulty," and difficulties are always a test of character. The pessimist is a man who sees in every opportunity a difficulty; and the optimist is a man who sees in every difficulty an opportunity. This is a world of action. We were not sent here merely to have a comfortable time. Men and women who have been anything to the world,—men and women who are anything to God,—are those who remember that the first purpose for which man is sent into the world is to subdue, to achieve, to conquer in the realms of right. The Latins thought of difficulty as a

bar that stops us from doing something. And the real test of all difficulty is whether we stop doing or not because of it. The people who have always found a heavenly life impossible on earth, need to be brought into touch with Jesus Christ.

When Napoleon was at St. Helena just one hundred years ago, he saw smoke on the horizon one day. He asked what it was, and was told that it was one of the newly-invented ships propelled by steam power. He was filled with chagrin, for it was the proof that the impossible was being achieved. He had said: "Give me command of the Channel for six hours only, and I will conquer England, and then the world"; and he lay camped upon the sands of Boulogne waiting for the adverse winds to stop. His wise men had informed him that the experiments with steam-boats showed that propulsion by that method alone was impossible. So he waited with a flotilla of sailing ships. The winds continued adverse, and he had abandoned the scheme. Afterwards he learned that it was not impossible; it was only difficult. And he lost his dominion of the world through it. He might have been at St. James's instead of St.



Helena if he had believed in trying the impossible. Now the difference that Jesus Christ has made in the spiritual life is that He has made it possible for us to have victory where formerly we only found defeat. He said to His disciples: "Nothing shall be impossible to you"; and, on another occasion, "All things are possible to the man who trusts." And so Saul of Tarsus who, more than all perhaps, had to face great difficulties for the cause of Christ, writes triumphantly, even with the jangle of the handcuffs on his wrists, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Now, this was the great secret of Andrew's life. He had learned to refer everything to Jesus Christ. Even in the simplest things he seems to have made a practice of it. And if you say that the simplest things do not deserve the name of difficulties, I would reply that it is just on those simple things that life's shipwrecks are often made.

What are, on the whole, the five great difficulties that men come across in their daily life? I think we should say that they are the questions of sin, of moulding the characters of men, of making adequate daily supply for the

body, of extension and enterprise, and of those spiritual riddles that seem to baffle solution. Along those five lines the Gospel story records how Andrew's life moved forward smoothly and victoriously because telling Jesus everything was the key-note of it.

It all began in a walk that he and John, the son of Zebedee, took together. I remind you in passing how interesting it is to find Andrew and John walking together. We owe most of our knowledge of Andrew to John's loving pen. Peter and John walked together a good deal afterwards, one on each side of Jesus. Andrew and Philip came to walk together a good deal. But at this point Andrew and John were together, two younger brothers in their respective homes, two junior partners in the fishing business on the lake of Galilee. They were walking together with their master, John the Baptist, and they met Jesus. The Baptist turned to them, and said: "Look! that is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." Sin! That is the great problem, that always agitates men's hearts below the surface. The difficulty had been stirring in the minds of these two since they heard John the Preacher

call attention to the sins of which they were guilty, and to the load that needed to be washed away, not in the waters of Jordan, but in something infinitely more efficacious. Now John says : " There is the One who takes away the sins of the world." So they followed this new Light ; and He turned and said : " What is it ? " And they replied : " Master, where is your home ? " He said : " Come and see for yourselves." Just that ; and they came, and spent the day with Him, and learned the great secret. And if you had asked Andrew afterwards what he proposed to do with the sins about which his conscience had been roused by the preaching of John, he would have replied in the words we often sing :

I lay my sins on Jesus,  
The spotless Lamb of God :  
He bears them all, and frees us  
From the accursèd load.

Now men of religion of all time have been struggling just to take that load away. There are half a hundred fruitless remedies. Here is relief. - How simple it is when we bring it to Jesus ! Only at the Cross is our burden loosed.

I have read of a certain factory with complicated machinery for textile goods, where the instructions that are given in the workrooms are, "If your threads get tangled send for the foreman." One of the workers, a diligent and busy woman, got her threads tangled, and she tried to disentangle them, but only made them worse. After that she sent for the foreman. He came and looked, and then turned to her and said, "You have been doing this yourself." She said, "Yes." "Why did you not send for me, according to instructions?" he asked. And she, rather sullenly, said, "I did my best." And with that tact which a real leader should possess, he said quietly, "*Remember that doing your best is sending for me.*" "Doing your best is sending for Me," says Jesus. Andrew that day learned the formation of a principle. Not only the load of sin, but other difficulties would yield to this treatment.

And there came immediately before him a problem we all meet. He found a difficulty in the soul of his brother, Simon, who needed to be moulded by a Divine hand, Simon the impetuous, strong, headstrong. What a worker

for Christ he would make! But how can Andrew convince him? How can he make him feel the Presence that all day yesterday was irradiating his life? How can he make him understand that Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies? How can he make Simon learn where to take his sins? But it is no insoluble problem because of the new principle which Andrew has just learned. John the Apostle says: "He brought him to Jesus." And Jesus did the rest.) There is often no need to bring strong arguments to bear if men are face to face with Christ. That is where we so frequently make a mistake in discussing religion—~~that~~ we talk about things; and not about Him. When people bring forward objections, we take them to theology, and do not bring before them the unanswerable argument of all the ages—the fact of Christ. Face to face with Jesus Christ, the icy hardnesses that keep men away from Him are apt to melt. So Andrew brought his brother to Jesus. And the Master undertook to make of him a rock, promised to teach him the art of spiritual fishing, and enlisted him for responsible service. Again, the time passes, and

Andrew is faced with a third problem, the provision of necessities for hungry people. The bread of the people is a standing problem of all the ages. Andrew is not alone in facing it. But he is staggered for a moment by its immensity. There is the multitude with nothing to eat; and Philip, his comrade, and something of an arithmetician, is calculating how much it would cost, and how much bread it would take to feed the crowds. Jesus is looking on interestedly. He knows what He will do. But He set them this problem to see what they would do. Philip is looking inward: but Andrew looks upward. Then, hesitatingly, and yet with a faith that could never have spoken unless it had been faith, he looks into the face of Jesus, and says: "Master, I know it is not much; it does not seem as though they would go far; but there is a lad here with five loaves and two small fishes." That was great faith. It was a foolish suggestion in face of the needs. Five cakes and over seven thousand people. "Better offer them nothing," says your pessimist. But the Master turns, and with a reassuring smile, says: "Yes, Andrew, your life principle is still right;

carry it out and *bring them to Me.*" So they bring the loaves to Him, though there are only five. And that problem is solved. Andrew's temerity frightened himself, but Jesus was gladdened as always, because Andrew counted Him as the chief figure in his arithmetic.

Another year passes, and now it is Passover-time, and not very long before the Lord Himself is to die. A number of Greeks have come up to Jerusalem for the Feast; and they are anxious to meet Christ. ~~I think, though I cannot prove it, they had been reading the prophecy of Zechariah (Christ had just fulfilled a remarkable passage therein);~~ and they want to know what the Greeks have got to do with Jesus; ~~for Zechariah talks about antagonism between Greeks and Jews.~~ So they come to Philip, perhaps because of his Greek name, and they say to him: "Do you suppose that we could see Jesus?" Philip says: "I do not know; He is very busy; I am not sure; He told a Greek woman that He was only sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel; still He healed her in the end. I will ask a friend of mine." And he goes off, finds Andrew, and



says to him : " Here are a number of Greeks who want to see the Master. Do you think He would see them ? " Andrew says : " Go and ask Him. " Philip hesitates. Andrew says : " I will. " And so Andrew and Philip come and tell Jesus. And the Master says : " Yes. " Well might St. Paul tell the Greeks that " Yes " was one of the most precious names of Jesus. So Andrew brings a fresh clientele. That is the problem of enterprise ; the daring that brings the outsider face to face with Jesus Christ is justified. That key opens every lock in the Palace of Life. Lord Kelvin used to say : " When you are on the verge of a difficulty you are on the eve of a discovery. " Andrew found that God is not only the God of the Jew, but also of the Greek. That was the missionary's proud message for the world in after-days. Christ never calls a man an outsider, if he wishes to come inside.

Then there comes another problem immediately after. The Gospel of St. Mark is largely inspired by the reminiscences of St. Peter. And we owe the touch in the thirteenth chapter perhaps to Andrew's brother. They were discussing Advent difficulties ; not the inner three



only, Peter, and James, and John; but four, the chief four. It is the only place in the Gospel story where we find the four grouped—Peter, James, John, and Andrew. And in their perplexity they come and say: "Master, tell us when shall these things be?" And you and I owe one of the great Divine explanations of the Advent to the suggestion of one of the little band of four that came to Jesus: and I cannot help feeling, because we see and know the principle of his life, that perhaps the idea came from Andrew, who always went to Jesus with everything. Perhaps that was why St. Peter suggested that St. Mark should put it in the Gospel.

I was reading the other day of a journalist, whose close application to her writing and to her desk sorely tried her eyes. She went to see a famous oculist, who asked her to describe her work and her home; and he found that she lived within sight of the Alleghany Mountains. He said to her: "I do not think you need glasses; you need not give up your work; but get up from your desk every hour, and go out and stand for a time on the verandah, and gaze at the mountains: your eyes do not need

so much strengthening as alternation of sight. You will find as you look at the longer range that the sight will correct itself, and your eyes will be rested." It is that which you and I need in regard to the difficulties in life. Take long views. Work not for to-day, but for the coming of the kingdom. Do not look at earth alone; do not take counsel merely of this man or that. Go and tell Jesus. The difficulties find their solution at His feet. For, as Mr. Chesterton has said, "It is not true that Christianity has been tried and found wanting; it is only true that it has been found difficult and not tried." And Andrew's constant secret of victory was this—that in the shame of sin's heaviness; in the persuasion of men; in the provision for life's hungry days; in proposals for extension of work; in the purposes of God which need to be interpreted,—he could always bring everything to Jesus, and especially the difficulties, the things that are hard, and might check action.

There rises before my eyes the vision of a monument that stands in one of the squares of Turin. It commemorates the boring of the Mont Cenis Tunnel, which occupied fourteen

years, and is six and a half miles long. It was one of the great engineering achievements of mid-Victorian days. When the tunnel was opened, the Italians, in triumph, erected this monument built of rough-hewn stones formed into a column. Round about the base are once powerful figures, nerveless in defeat and despair, representing Nature's forces; and on the top there is poised against the sky the angel of victory, with wings stretched up towards the heavens. It was the artist's conception of man inspired by God overcoming earth's difficulties, and subduing them, the first commission God ever gave him.

And round about the monument of Andrew's life we seem to see these symbols carved,—a bundle of accusing sins, a brother led by the hand, twelve baskets filled with the fragments of five loaves, a group of shy inquirers outside a door ajar, and the roll of a book whose seals are broken. And then, crowning all, the figure of the Master, with Andrew looking up into His face, and from the lips that spake as never yet man spake, we seem to hear the words coming: "Bring them unto Me." For Andrew does with all things and all men what you and

I would be wise to do with all our difficulties—he brings them to Jesus. So to-day we read a record, not of failure, nor of recovery, but of a life that, so far as the story goes, shows no failure at all.

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